

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CANBER 03821 270838Z
ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 OMB-01 /056 W
-----280054Z 075588 /20

R 270734Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 532
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
AMCONSUL MELBOURNE
AMCONSUL SYDNEY
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL BRISBANE
AMCONSUL PERTH

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 3821

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, AS
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION WHITLAM

1. I CALLED ON OPPOSITON LEADER WHITLAM WITH MY POLCOUNS
ON MAY 26. WHAT WAS SCHEDULED AS A COURTESY CALL TURNED
INTO A LONG SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION. AFTER A PERIOD OF
REMINISSENCE OVER LYNDON B. JOHNSON, WITH WHOM MR. WHITLAM
REMAINS MUCH IMPRESSED PARTICULARLY OVER JOHNSON'S CONTRI-
BUTIONS IN THE FIELD OF CIVIL RIGHTS, HIS PERSONAL QUALITIES
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 CANBER 03821 270838Z

AND HIS ABILITY TO DEAL WITH CONGRESS, THE OPPOSITION LEADER
WENT ON TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A) THERE WAS NO DIRECT MILITARY THREAT TO AUSTRALIA.
ONLY THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA HAD THE CAPABILITY TO
THREATEN AUSTRALIA AND NEITHER OF THEM HAD ANY REASON TO DO SO.
B) FOR THE FIRST TIME AS LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION,
WHITLAM COULD TELL THE AUSTRALIAN ELECTORATE THAT AUSTRALIA

WAS JUST AS IMPORTANT TO THE US AS THE US WAS TO AUSTRALIA WITHOUT FEAR OF POLITICAL CONSEQUENCE.

C) HE WELCOMED PRESIDENT CARTER'S INITIATIVES, PARTICULARLY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND KOREA. WHITLAM HIMSELF HAD BROKEN MANY TIES WITH SOUTH AFRICA WHEN HE WAS IN OFFICE--SPORTING TIES WITH HIS REFUSAL TO PERMIT THE SOUTH AFRICAN RUGBY TEAM TO PLAY IN AUSTRALIA OR EVEN TO TRANSIT AUSTRALIA ON ITS WAY TO NEW ZEALAND, AND OFFICIAL TIES BY REFUSING TO CONTINUE TO REPRESENT SOUTH AFRICA'S INTEREST IN INTERNATIONAL BOEIS. AS FOR KOREA, WHITLAM HAD REESTABLISHED RELATIONS WITH THE NORTH. AUSTRALIA WAS THE FIRST FORMERLY BELLIGERENT NATION TO DO SO.

D) WHITLAM BELIEVED THAT AUSTRALIA COULD BEST SERVE THE EASTERN WORLD AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. HE NOTED THAT AUSTRALIA WAS SURROUNDED BY LDC'S, SHARED SOME OF THEIR DIFFICULTIES AND ASPIRATIONS, AND HAD A USEFUL ROLE TO PLAY.

E) WHITLAM SAID THAT THE US SHOULD WATCH THE RIGHT-WING IN AUSTRALIA BECAUSE THEIR INTERESTS OFTEN FAILED TO COINCIDE WITH THOSE OF THE US. THEY HAD HELPED PUSH US INTO VIETNAM. THEY WERE NOW TRYING TO PUSH US INTO EVEN GREATER MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN THE INDIAN OCEAN.

F) WHITLAM SAID THAT I SHOULD BE CAREFUL NOT TO BE SEEN AS THE DIRECT REPRESENTATIVE OF US MULTI-NATIONAL CORPORATIONS. THIS COULD HAVE A BAD EFFECT IN AUSTRALIA AND ON MY STAY HERE AS IT HAD HAD A BAD EFFECT ON SOME PREVIOUS AMBASSADORS.

G) WHITLAM PROPOSES TO VISIT WASHINGTON LATER THIS YEAR, PROBABLY IN DECEMBER OR JANUARY. HE SAID THAT HE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 CANBER 03821 270838Z

WOULD LIKE TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT CARTER AND I TOLD HIM I WOULD BE PLEASED TO MAKE AN EFFORT TO GET HIM AN APPOINTMENT AFTER MR. WHITLAM FIRMS UP HIS SCHEDULE.

H) WHITLAM EQUATED THE LIBERALS WITH THE REPUBLICAN PARTY IN THE US AND HIS PARTY WITH THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

I) WHITLAM DID NOT MENTION ALLEGATIONS OF CIA ACTIVITIES IN AUSTRALIA.

2. MR. WHITLAM IS A DIRECT, POWERFUL, ARTICULATE, AND ATTRACTIVE LEADER. AT THIS STAGE, IT IS STILL NOT CERTAIN WHETHER HE WILL BE ABLE TO REMAIN AS OPPOSITION LEADER. HAVING MET THE MAN, HOWEVER, I BELIEVE THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY WILL BE HARD PRESSED TO FIND A NEW LEADER AS KNOWLEDGEABLE AND FORCEFUL AS HE APPEARS TO BE.
ALSTON

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MEETINGS, OPPOSITION PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977CANBER03821
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770190-1027
Format: TEL
From: CANBERRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770511/aaaaajce.tel
Line Count: 112
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 869f6088-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2342939
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MEETING WITH LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION WHITLAM
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, AS, US, (WHITLAM)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/869f6088-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009